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SPECIAL ANALYSES

EUROPE: Impact of a Soviet Failure To Invade Poland

If Polish political events continue in their current direction and Moscow holds off on the use of military force, the implications for all of Europe will be enormous. For the Soviets, the costs may well outweigh the sharp but perhaps shorter term consequences of invasion. [REDACTED]

The diffusion of power between Communists and non-party organizations in Poland will be a mixed blessing. It will help if a skeptical population is convinced that it has a stake and a genuine voice in the austerity measures that are necessary. On the other hand, it will bring into the decisionmaking process inexperienced individuals who will be anxious to guard their newly acquired power and distrustful of those who relinquished it. [REDACTED]

Prospects for a modest economic recovery within several years seem reasonably good. Not all of the workers' expectations can be met, however, no matter how the system is transformed. The net result will be a strong underlying current of tension and periodic crises as the party, the unions, and the Church try to work out separately and with one another the characteristics of the new "model" of socialism. [REDACTED]

In Eastern Europe

A successfully liberalized Poland would be a disruptive factor in Eastern Europe. Demands for similar treatment, however, probably would be more sporadic and disorganized, and, for the next year or two, the authorities should be able to contain them. [REDACTED]

Over the longer term, Soviet inaction and the accumulating economic problems of Eastern Europe would embolden reformers to speak out more persistently. Their message

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would be likely to draw large audiences among a younger generation more receptive to change and sensitive to the deficiencies of the existing system. [REDACTED]

In the USSR

Soviet society probably is the most immune to the Polish "infection." It has a strong tradition of submission to authority, and dissent is fragmented. Even here, however, there is growing evidence of consumer, labor, and ethnic unrest. If the Polish experiment succeeds, the desire to emulate it might grow. [REDACTED]

As the appeal of the Polish liberalization increased throughout the Bloc, the decision not to invade Poland could come back to haunt those who made it. The "who lost Poland" debate would be particularly intense if the Brezhnev succession were in process. [REDACTED]

The debate would pit those who favored discipline, control, and the use of military force against those prepared to allow some reform in Poland as long as it did not undermine Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. The outcome of so fundamental a debate could shake the foundations of Marxism-Leninism and have a major impact on the course of East-West relations. [REDACTED]

Western Europe

While an increasingly liberalized Poland would produce anguish in the Kremlin, it would mean some benefits for Moscow's policy in Western Europe. Many East Europeans would cite Soviet restraint as evidence of the value Moscow places on detente. [REDACTED]

In addition, pressure for arms control progress, expanded trade relations with the USSR, and the sale of high technology items would increase. Differences between the US and its NATO Allies also could emerge, and Moscow would exploit them. [REDACTED]

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The Warsaw Pact

Signs that a liberalized Poland could not be counted on to fulfill its commitment to Warsaw Pact security would prompt the most serious concern in Moscow. Current Pact plans call for the Poles to form and command a military front by themselves in a war with NATO. They also are responsible for supporting the movement of Soviet troops and supplies through their territory. No other Soviet ally has such vital responsibilities. [REDACTED]

Moscow cannot afford to have troops of questionable loyalty carrying out these key assignments. Invasion, however, would further alienate the Polish armed forces and could disrupt Pact effectiveness for a lengthy period.
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